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Ms Hickey
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Hickey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – personal social and health education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 19 January 2009 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on economic well-being.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with you, the deputy head teacher, the PSHE leader, physical education leader, information and communication technology (ICT) leader, representatives from the school council and a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons and a Special Mention assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement is good.

- Achievement is supported by a stimulating school environment and a rich variety of activities organised by the school.
- Pupils across the school know what is meant by a balanced diet. They understand the five fruit and vegetables a day message and know which foods they should restrict.

- Pupils understand the importance of exercise in keeping physically and mentally healthy, and many participate in the wide range of activities provided.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They are well aware of the dangers of the internet, and understand the effects of drug and alcohol misuse. They have practised withstanding peer group pressure using role-play.
- Older pupils understand the changes that occur at puberty and can talk sensibly about questions they have.
- Pupils are open, polite and friendly. They enjoy PSHE lessons. Pupils are developing self-confidence well supported by the inclusive ethos of the school. They feel they can go to adults in the school for help and support.
- Many of the younger pupils, struggle with oral expression. They cannot speak in sentences and much of what they say is inaudible. They have a limited range of vocabulary in which to express their feelings and emotions.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- Lessons are characterised by very good relationships, high levels of care for individual pupils and good behaviour management skills.
- Generally lessons are well planned and have clear PSHE objectives which are shared effectively with pupils.
- However, teaching is inconsistent. A few lessons were too dominated by the teacher and children were not given sufficient opportunity to find things out for themselves through exploration and play.
- Children who are especially vulnerable are identified early and given effective extra help in developing personal and social skills in a transition class.
- Outstanding use is made of ICT to support PSHE. For example, the older pupils have a 'Worry Website' where they can get help on aspects of growing up.
- Assessment of progress against the end of key stages statements has recently been put into place and is developing well.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- Outstanding use is made of a range of external speakers to enhance pupils' learning in PSHE.
- Assemblies make a valuable contribution to the development of social skills by giving pupils an opportunity to participate and develop their self-esteem. "Talk Time" homework was set in the assembly observed. This asks pupils to go home and discuss with their family a particular topic. It helps to develop skills of debate and reflection.
- The Healthy Schools award has had a positive impact on healthy eating and exercise.

- Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) materials are used carefully to enhance PSHE. The school has just reviewed its long-term planning for PSHE and is working on better links between PSHE and SEAL to make a more coherent experience for pupils.
- Pupils have a good variety of opportunities to contribute to the wider community and the school council. They feel they are listened to and that they have a real influence on how the school is run. The school council recently won top prize in a competition for an anti-bullying leaflet.
- The school has a garden where older pupils enjoy growing their own food and flowers. This experience makes an excellent contribution to PSHE.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage does not include sufficient elements of choice, exploration and play to adequately support children's personal and social development.

Leadership and management of PSHE

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- Staff have created a happy and safe learning environment for PSHE where pupils feel secure. This is clearly demonstrated by the high quality display work around the school, most of which relates to PSHE.
- The PSHE subject leader has only been in post for a term but she is completing the PSHE certificate training and has written an excellent action plan. She knows what has to be done and is passionate about doing it.
- PSHE receives excellent support from the senior managers who recognise fully its importance. Access to whole staff and individual training to improve the teaching of the subject is outstanding.
- All policies are in place and are of high quality. The sex and relationship policy is being reviewed with staff, governors and parents in order to improve provision.

Subject issue: economic well-being

This area is satisfactory.

- Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities and raise money for charity. Year 5 and 6 pupils have been very enterprising in the work they have done to support the school garden. Year 2 pupils work with Young Enterprise doing a unit on the family in conjunction with the local police.
- There is some work on budgeting and looking after pocket money but this is in need of further development.
- The school is aware of the need to introduce pupils to a range of work roles and to raise aspirations. The wide variety of visitors helps to achieve these aims.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring consistency in the teaching of PSHE
- providing more structured support for speaking in PSHE lessons.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector